

**STEP**



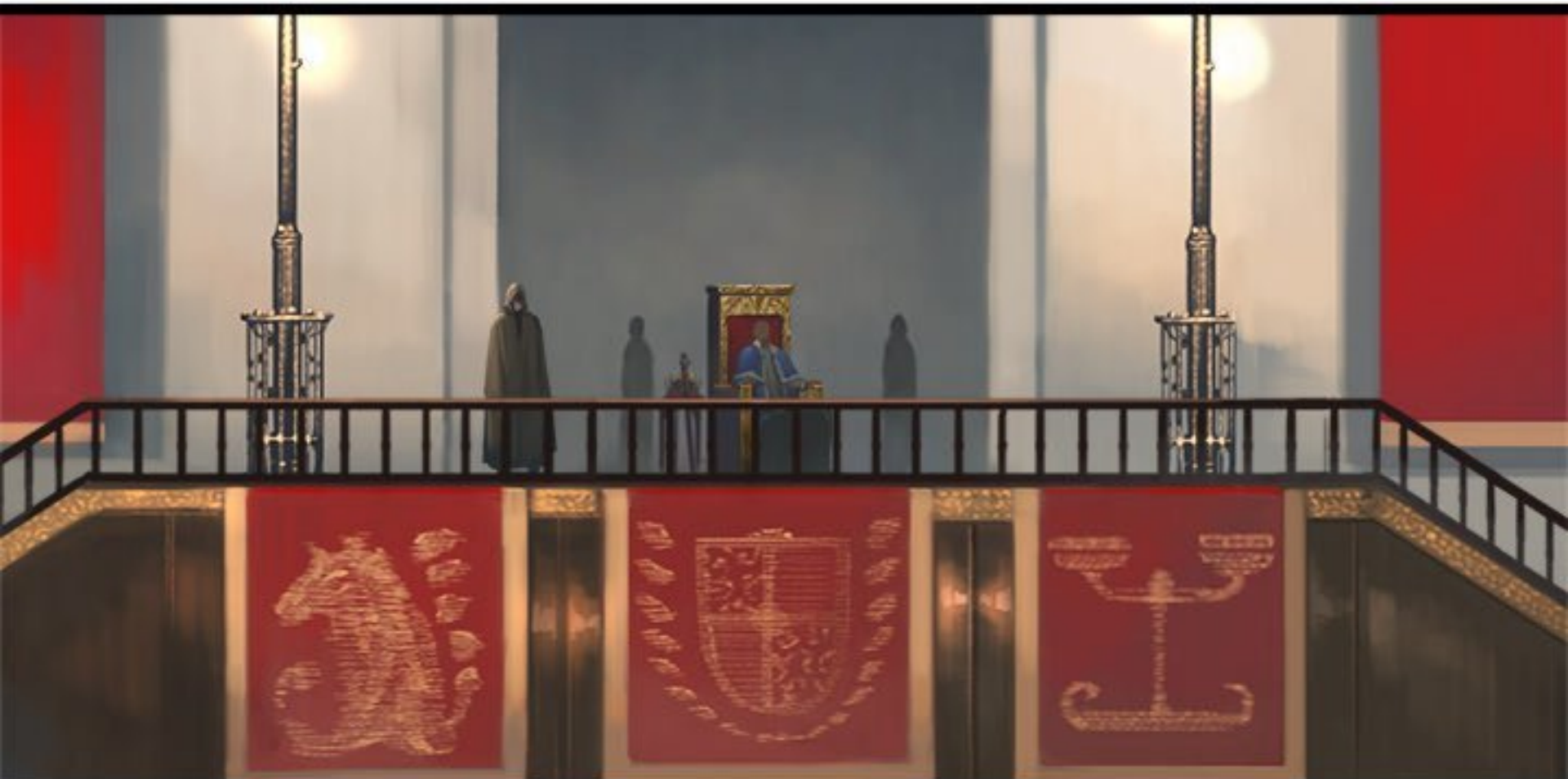
**STEP**



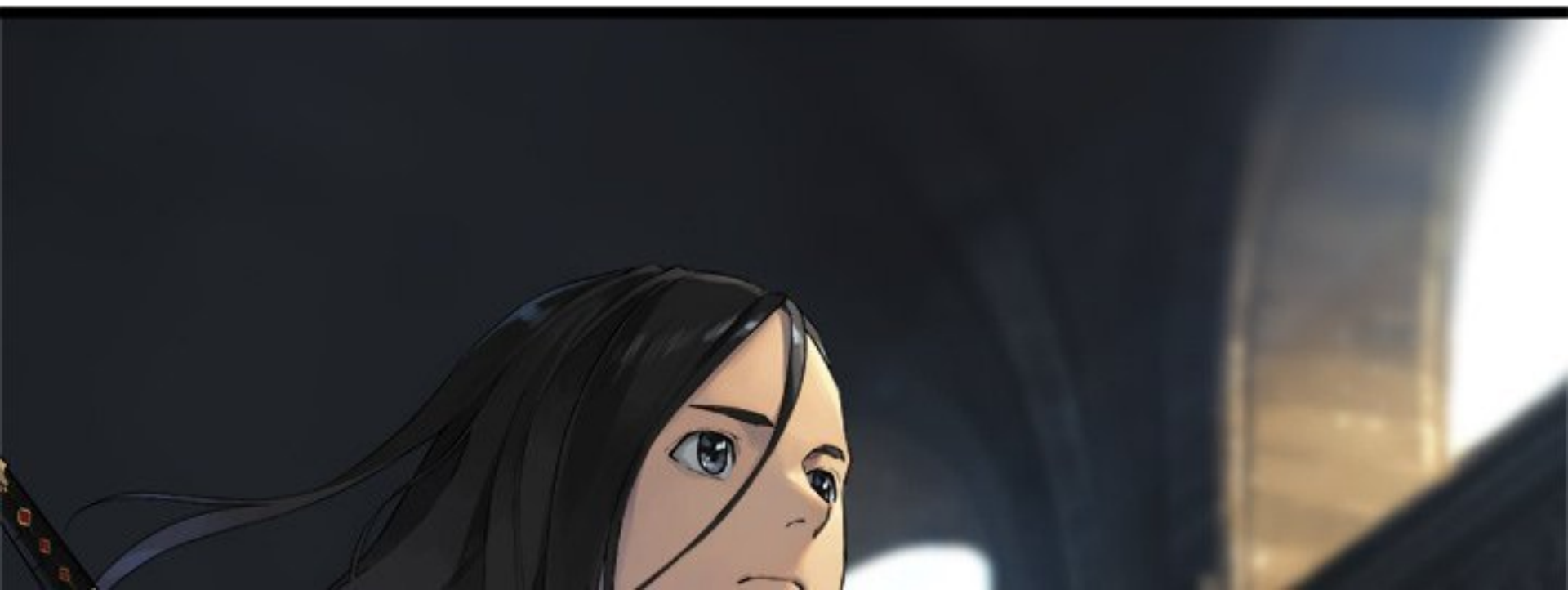














IF I DON'T  
SPEAK THE  
TRUTH...

EYA SAID  
SHE'D TAKE  
AI'S SOUL.






BUT IF I TELL  
THEM THAT THIS  
KINGDOM MUST BE  
DESTROYED...








AI WILL  
DEFINITELY BE  
CHARGED WITH  
TREASON OR BE  
TREATED AS A  
DEMON...

AND WILL  
BE EXECUTED  
RIGHT AWAY.



I GUESS IT'LL  
BE IMPOSSIBLE...



TO PROTECT  
HER FOREVER...



THE KING...







DEFINITELY  
TRIED TO HELP  
OUR EXPEDITION.



I'LL JUST  
HAVE TO  
HOPE...

THE KING




DIDN'T DO  
THAT...



TO SIMPLY  
STRENGTHEN  
HIS ROYAL  
AUTHORITY...








AND GIVE  
MANA BACK TO  
THE MAGICIANS WHO  
ARE ON HIS SIDE...



BUT RATHER TO  
TRULY SOLVE THIS  
PROBLEM...

YOUR  
MAJESTY.




A comic book panel featuring a large, multi-story stone building at night. The building has several tall, narrow windows, some of which are illuminated from within, casting a warm glow. In the foreground, there is a dark, silhouetted structure with a series of steps or a ramp. Two small figures are visible on the left side of this structure, looking towards the building. A large speech bubble is positioned in the upper center of the panel, containing text. The overall atmosphere is dark and mysterious.

WE CAME  
BACK FROM THE  
EXPEDITION YOU  
HAVE ORDERED.



HUH? YOU'RE  
REALLY BACK.





NO ONE  
EVER RETURNED  
ONCE THEY WERE  
SENT OFF TO THE  
NORTH, SO I ASSUMED  
THAT THIS WOULD BE  
ANOTHER TRIP TO  
YOUR DEATH.



WOW...

IT SEEMS  
THAT YOU WERE  
EXTREMELY  
WORRIED, YOUR  
MAJESTY.

BUT THE  
SUMMONER THAT HAS  
BEEN SELECTED FOR  
THIS EXPEDITION...





HAHAHA

IS A TALENTED  
ONE THAT EVEN OUR  
ASSOCIATION HAS  
BEEN INTERESTED  
IN FOR A WHILE.

I TRULY  
BELIEVED THAT  
THEY'D RETURN,  
YOUR MAJESTY.

BULLSH...

PFFT


...?





AH, I KNEW IT.





LOOKS LIKE  
THE SUCCESS OF  
THIS EXPEDITION WAS  
ALL BECAUSE OF YOUR  
HARD WORK.



TH-THAT'S  
RIDICULOUS...



TCH...

HMM...

IT'S SO HARD  
TO OPEN MY  
MOUTH...



EVEN WHEN  
I'M LISTENING TO  
THIS RIDICULOUS  
CONVERSATION.

I GUESS  
THIS IS...



WHAT THE  
DIFFERENCE IN  
RANK MEANS...

BULLSHIT.













L-LORD  
YUTUBA...?

**GASP**



WH-WHO'S  
HE?

**MURMUR**

**MURMUR**

IT LOOKS  
LIKE HE'S THE  
SUMMONED  
CREATURE.



H-HEY,  
SUMMONER!

WHAT IS  
YOUR NAME...?

I-IT'S  
MAINA...




WE'RE IN  
TROUBLE!

IF YOUR  
SUMMONED  
CREATURE IS  
CAPABLE OF  
COMMUNICATING  
WITH HUMANS...




THEN YOU  
SHOULD'VE AT  
LEAST TAUGHT  
HIM OUR WAYS  
AND COURTESY!



A character wearing a red robe is partially visible in the top panel of the comic.

WHAT  
OUTRAGEOUS  
ATTITUDE IS THIS  
IN FRONT OF OUR  
MAJESTY-

BAHAHAHA!

A character with long black hair, wearing a black hooded cloak, is laughing heartily in the bottom panel. The background is dark with some architectural elements visible.

SERIOUSLY,  
WHO'S TEACHING  
WHO?!



DO YOU  
REALLY THINK  
SOME PLUNK THAT  
WASN'T ABLE TO  
SUMMON ANYTHING  
IN HER LIFE...

CAN JUST  
CONTROL SOMEONE LIKE  
ME AFTER SUMMONING  
ME PURELY OUT OF  
DUMB LUCK?





A comic book panel depicting a palace interior. In the foreground, a balcony with a red railing and glass panels is visible, with several small figures standing on it. The background shows a large, ornate room with a red carpet and a large doorway. A large speech bubble is in the center, and another smaller one is in the top left.

IF YOU  
CAN'T CONTROL  
IT, DE-SUMMON  
HIM NOW!

IT IS NOT  
ALLOWED TO  
USE SUMMONING  
MAGIC INSIDE  
THE PALACE  
WALLS-



I THINK  
IT'S FINE.



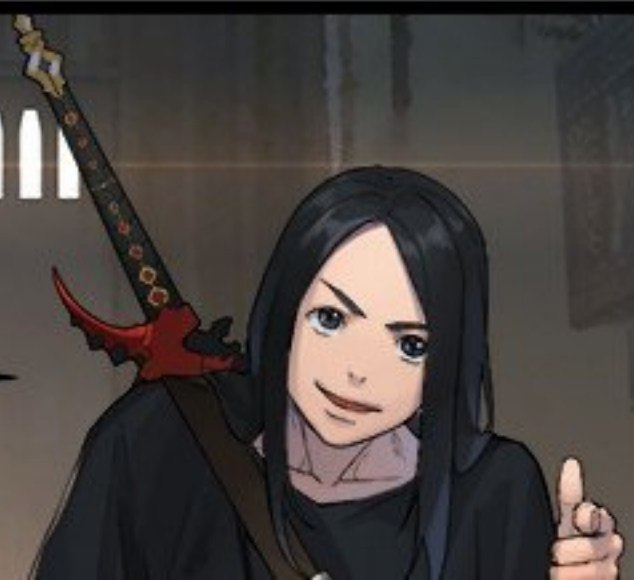


INTERESTING.





CONTINUE,  
SUMMONED  
CREATURE.



OOH~ I LIKE  
YOU, MAN.





THE TRUTH  
IS, WE WERE  
STOPPED WITH  
TOO MANY NEEDLESS  
INTERRUPTIONS ON  
OUR EXPEDITION.

BUT THE  
FUNNY THING  
IS THOSE PEOPLE  
WHO STOPPED  
US WERE...





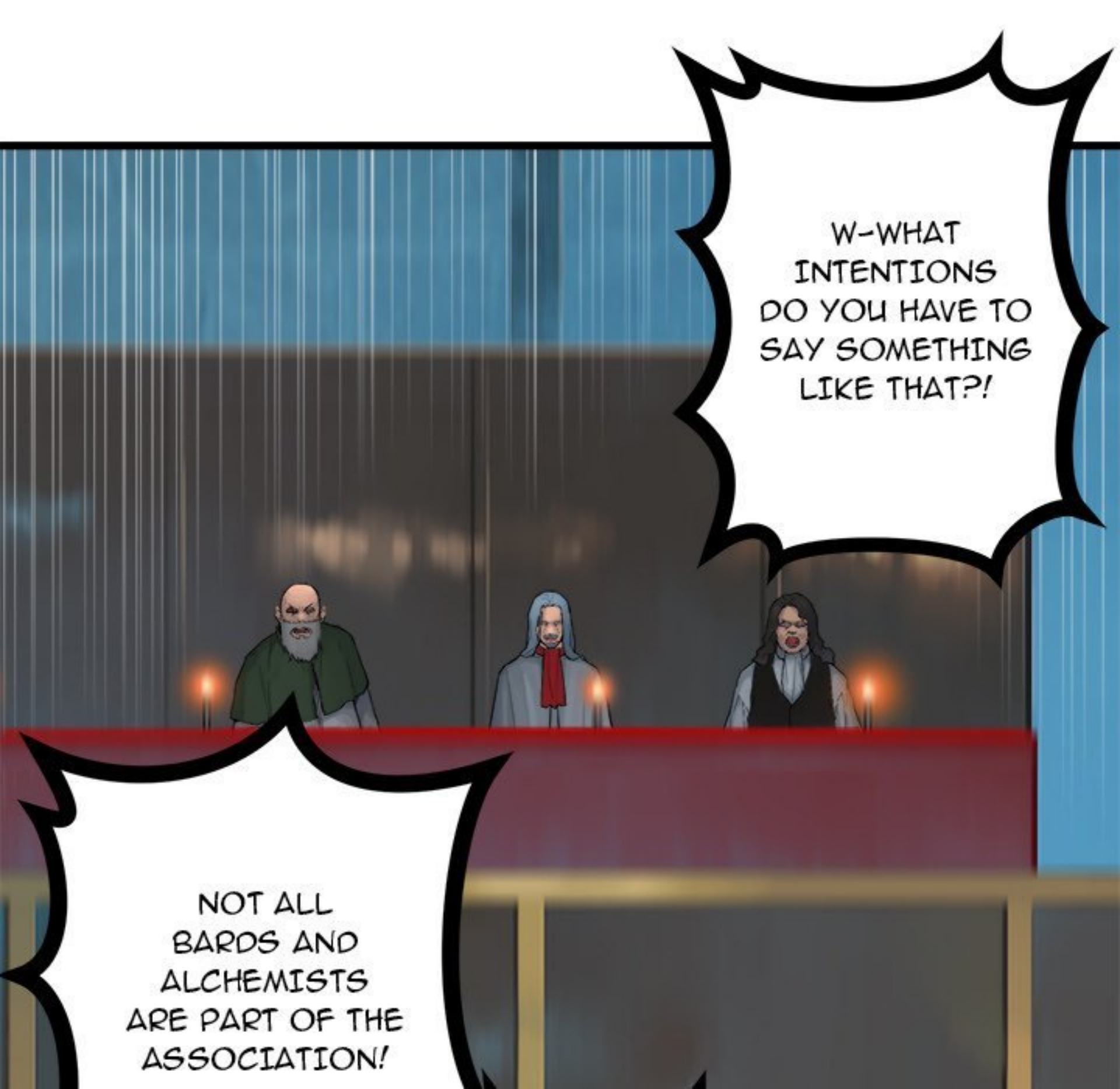
BARDS...

OR ALCHEMISTS.



I HEARD  
THOSE PEOPLE  
WERE MANAGED  
BY THE DUKES  
HERE...


SO WOULD  
YOU CARE TO  
EXPLAIN WHY  
THE HELL THAT  
HAPPENED?

A comic panel depicting three individuals seated at a long table covered with a red cloth. The setting is dimly lit, with blue light from a window in the background and warm light from candles on the table. The person on the left is a bald man with a grey beard wearing a green cloak. The person in the middle has long blue hair and wears a grey robe with a red scarf. The person on the right is a woman with long dark hair wearing a black vest over a white shirt. A large, jagged speech bubble originates from the woman on the right, containing her dialogue. Another jagged speech bubble is at the bottom of the panel, containing a response.

W-WHAT  
INTENTIONS  
DO YOU HAVE TO  
SAY SOMETHING  
LIKE THAT?!

NOT ALL  
BARDS AND  
ALCHEMISTS  
ARE PART OF THE  
ASSOCIATION!



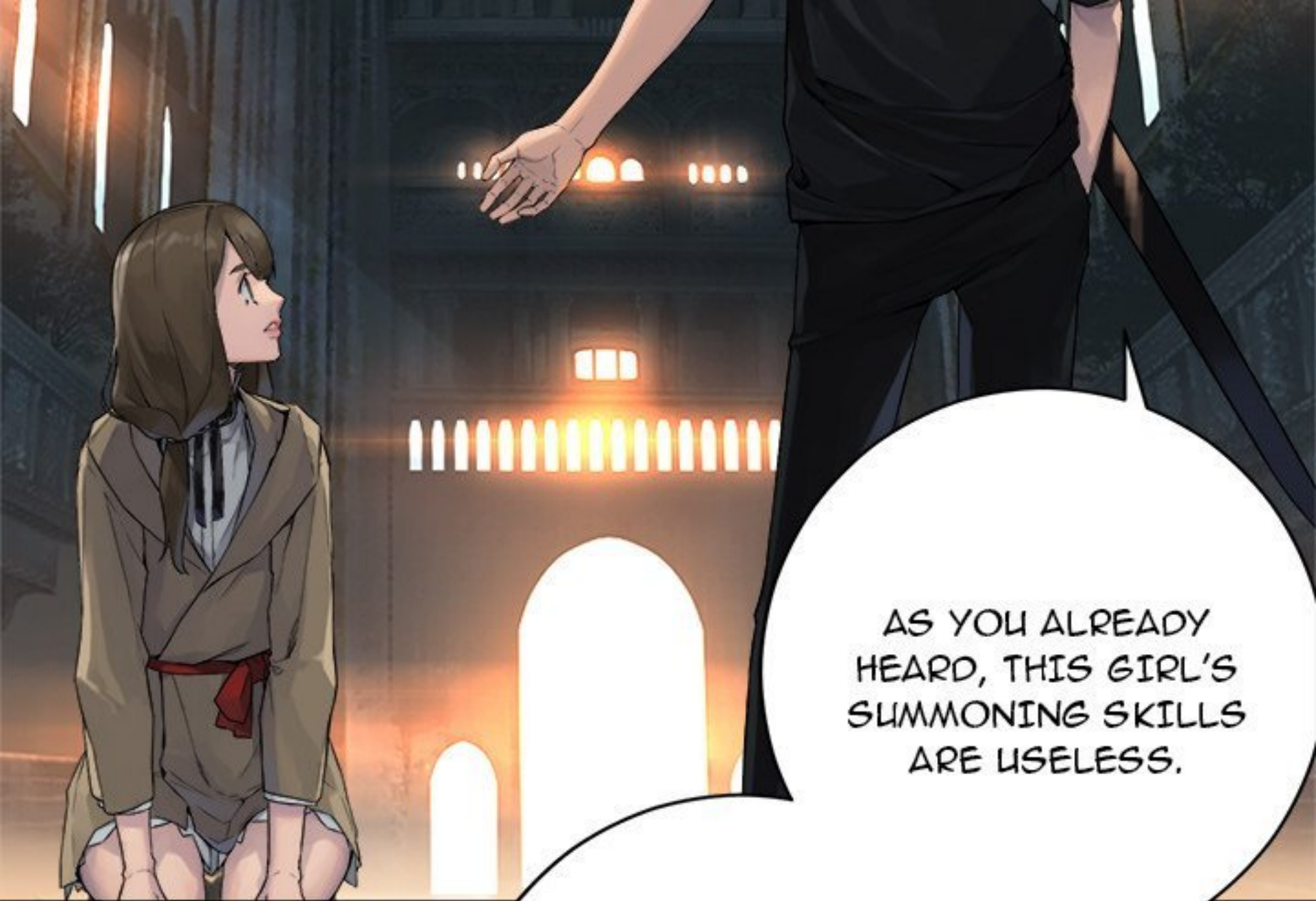


WE CANNOT  
HELP BUT THINK  
YOUR WORDS HAVE  
IMPURE INTENTIONS!



I SEE... SO  
HAVE I BEEN  
MISTAKEN?






AS YOU ALREADY  
HEARD, THIS GIRL'S  
SUMMONING SKILLS  
ARE USELESS.

BUT NOW  
HE'S TELLING  
YOU THAT SHE'S  
A TALENTED ONE  
THEY WERE ALWAYS  
INTERESTED IN?




IF THAT'S TRUE...



A person wearing a white robe with a red sash is shown from the waist up, standing on a red surface. The background is dark with a hint of a sunset or sunrise. A large white speech bubble is on the right side of the image.

HOW COME  
YOU DON'T EVEN  
KNOW HER  
NAME?



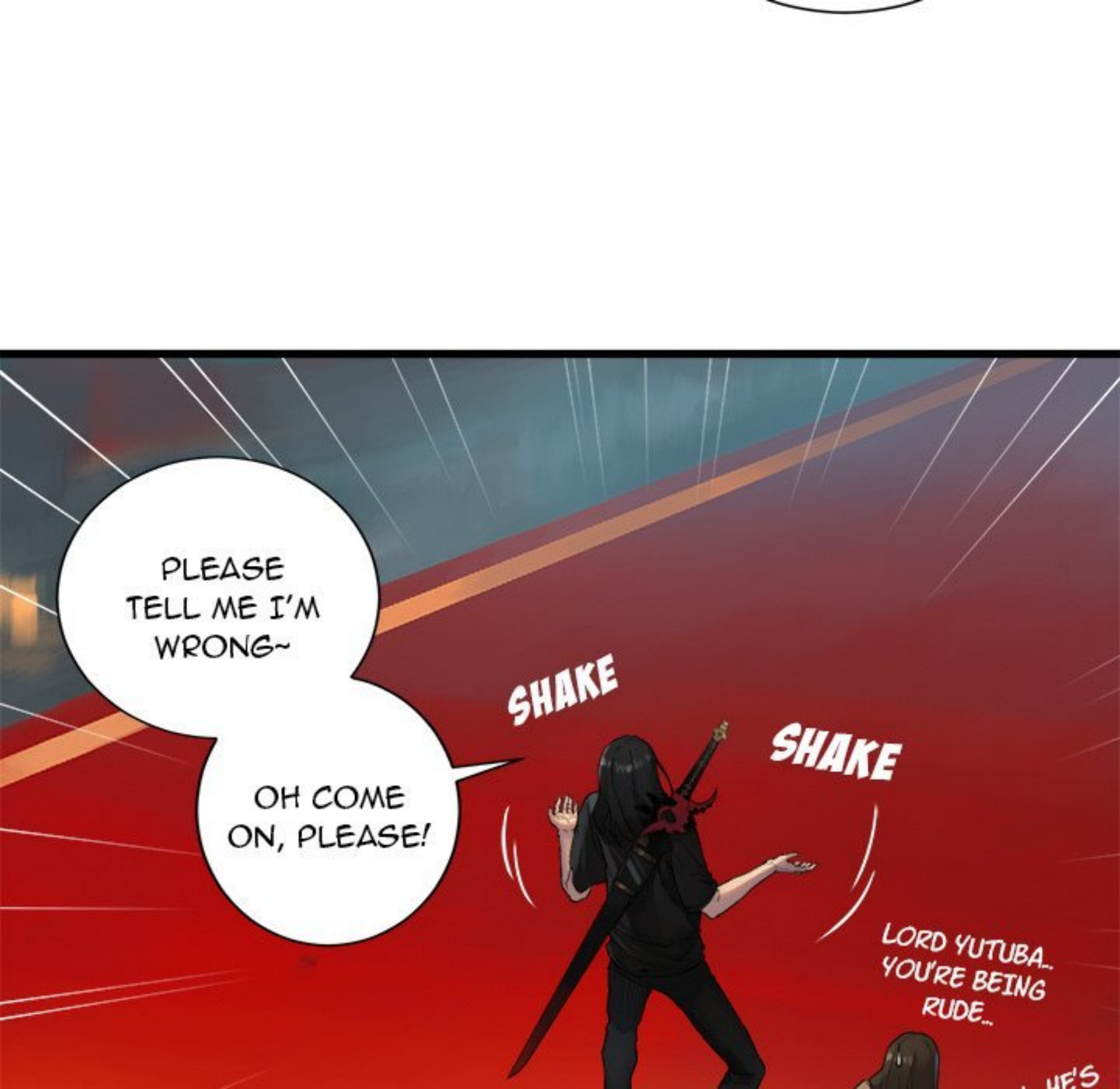
THEY WERE  
LUCKY THAT I WAS  
THE ONE WHO WAS  
SUMMONED...

BECAUSE  
THESE TWO PLUNKS  
WOULD'VE DIED ON  
THEIR WAY TO SOLVE THE  
NATION'S MOST IMPORTANT  
MATTER.





IT'S AS IF  
SOMEONE SET UP  
THE WHOLE THING  
SO THE EXPEDITION  
COULD FAIL.



PLEASE  
TELL ME I'M  
WRONG~

OH COME  
ON, PLEASE!

**SHAKE**

**SHAKE**

LORD YUTUBA..  
YOU'RE BEING  
RUDE...

HE'S



W-WHAT  
ARE YOU  
TALKING  
ABOUT-







HOW WEIRD!!!



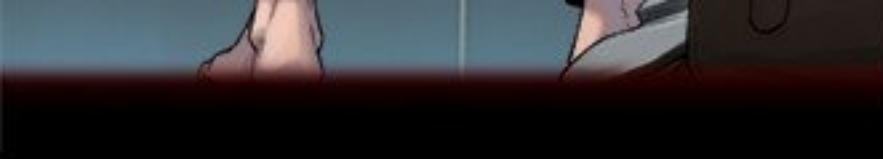
I HEARD THAT  
YOUR DAUGHTER'S  
A PRETTY TALENTED  
SUMMONER!

SUMMONER!



I HEARD SHE  
CAN SUMMON THE





GODDESS OF STORMS  
AND CONTROL THUNDER  
AND LIGHTNING AND  
SHIT!




HOW COME  
SOMEONE SO  
TALENTED AS  
YOUR DAUGHTER...





DIDN'T GO  
ON THIS  
EXPEDITION...




BUT WAS  
INSTEAD IN THE



GROUP OF PEOPLE  
WHO AMBUSHED  
US ON OUR WAY  
BACK HERE?





IS IT STILL A  
MISUNDERSTANDING?

**MURMUR**

**MURMUR**








A comic book panel featuring a man with a shaved head and a concerned expression, looking upwards. He is positioned in the lower foreground, with only his head and shoulders visible. Behind him is a large, highly ornate golden structure, possibly a throne or a piece of ancient machinery, with intricate carvings and a deep red cushioned seat. The background is a plain, light blue wall. A speech bubble originates from the man, containing the text "DUKE KALLUNIK."

DUKE KALLUNIK.

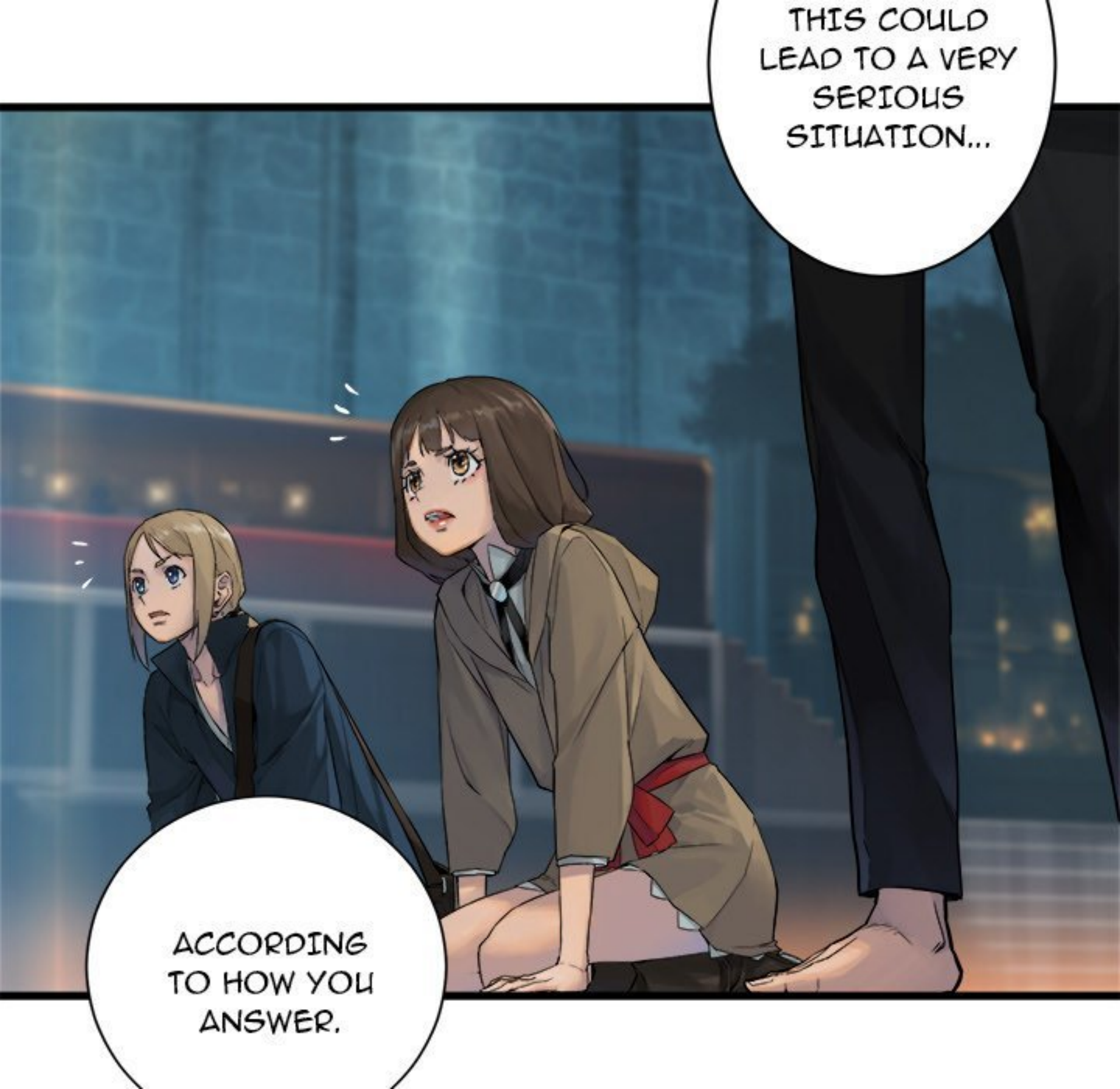


IS WHAT HE  
SAID ALL TRUE?



THIS COULD  
LEAD TO A VERY  
SERIOUS  
SITUATION...

ACCORDING  
TO HOW YOU  
ANSWER.









HIER SUMMON